



March 7, 2018

Senator John Coghill
Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee
State Capitol – Room 119
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Support for SB 124

Dear Senator Coghill:

We are writing to express our support for Senate Bill 124:

“An Act relating to the duties of physicians and health care practitioners when performing or inducing abortions; providing that a child removed from a pregnant woman’s womb alive after an abortion may be surrendered and found to be a child in need of aid; and providing for an effective date.”

SB 124 would establish a simple benchmark of human decency, requiring that infants born alive following an abortion procedure receive the same standard of care that would be afforded to any other child born at the same gestational age.

A federal bill quite similar to SB 124 passed by a wide margin in the U.S. House of Representatives earlier this year. This legislation, known as the “Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act” (H.R. 4712), generated compelling and sometimes gut-wrenching testimony about the reality of infants who are born alive following “failed” abortions.

Thousands of Alaskans have heard the powerful testimonies of Melissa Ohden and Gianna Jessen, two women who survived the abortions that were attempted on them. The Judiciary Committee, as it reviews SB 124, will presumably hear a great deal of dry testimony from legal and medical experts. This input, while essential, can have the unfortunate effect of obscuring the human dimension of this issue. I strongly encourage you to take three minutes to watch the video referenced below, and listen to Melissa Ohden’s story of surviving an attempted saline injection abortion, late in her mother’s pregnancy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4WJlVbEdWk>

Unfortunately, there is abundant evidence that not all infants who survive abortion are as lucky as Melissa Ohden. The 2013 trial of infamous Philadelphia abortionist Kermit Gosnell revealed for America the dark and seamy side of the abortion industry.

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Dr. Gosnell routinely killed children who survived abortion, and his ghastly methods were described in chilling detail in the 281-page Report of the Grand Jury:

“Gosnell had a simple solution for the unwanted babies he delivered: he killed them. He didn’t call it that. He called it ‘ensuring fetal demise.’ The way he ensured fetal demise was by sticking scissors into the back of the baby’s neck and cutting the spinal cord. He called that ‘snipping.’ Over the years, there were hundreds of ‘snippings.’”

We may never know the true number of babies born alive following an abortion, because of the incentive to cover up these occurrences. The former head of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control’s Abortion Surveillance Unit, Dr. Willard Cates, acknowledged this reality:

“[Live births] are little known because organized medicine, from fear of public clamor and legal action, treats them more as an embarrassment to be hushed up than a problem to be solved. It’s like turning yourself in to the IRS for an audit. What is there to gain? The tendency is not to report because there are only negative incentives.”

SB 124 represents an honest and humane attempt to confront an unpleasant issue that many would prefer to ignore. We urge your support for this critically important bill that has the potential to save the lives of innocent and vulnerable children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Minnery", is written over a light purple rectangular background.

Jim Minnery, President
Alaska Family Action